

# **A View from the Top**

**Admiral James O. Ellis, U.S. Navy**  
**Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Naval Forces, Europe**  
**Commander, Allied Forces Southern Europe**  
**and**  
**Commander, Joint Task Force NOBLE ANVIL**  
**During Operation ALLIED FORCE**

## **What This IS...and Is Not**

### **This is NOT:**

- ✦ **The story of the ALLIED FORCE air campaign**
- ✦ **Statistics, facts and figures**
- ✦ **What your staffs and component commanders can tell you better than I**
- ✦ **All good news**

### **This IS an attempt to give you:**

- ✦ **A senior Commander's unique perspectives and very personal opinions**
- ✦ **Thoughts on how the next Joint Force Commander**

can fight his campaign even better

- A springboard for open and frank discussion

# **There Is Much Good News**

**The most precise and lowest collateral damage air campaign... in history**

- Achieved all objectives... at the strategic, operational and tactical levels of war
- Zero aircrews lost in 78 days of round-the-clock ops and over 38,000 combat sorties
- NATO's largest combat operation in its history
- 13 of 19 allies contributed forces... 305 aircraft, almost 15,000 sorties
- Many operational firsts... but most importantly...

**FRY forces are out of Kosovo... and the process of recovery is well underway under KFOR**

# Operational Firsts

## Impressive combat debuts:

- B-2 / JDAM “Global Reach—Global Power” concept
- SLAM-equipped P-3C AIP
- TLAMS launched by the Royal Navy – 21 launched from HMS **SPLENDID** (and reloaded in-theater)
- C-17 made possible the first-time air deployment of a major, multi-role Army force of M1s, M2s, MLRS, 105 and 155 howitzers, and engineer equipment
- JWAC Tier-4 Collateral Damage predictive modeling validated...time after time...in combat

And broad, multi-dimensional non-combat theater ops continued unabated...

## The Air Campaign

Highly effective and superbly executed... but politically constrained

- **Air power was an effective “arrow,” but it was only one arrow in our “quiver”...needed to be complemented by other arrows to be maximally effective**
- **Air strikes were effective against VJ armor only after the UCK launched its major offensive**
- **UCK forced the defending forces to uncover and mass their armor and mechanized forces**
- **Q36/Q37 highly effective in identifying VJ indirect fire assets... but work remains on “sensor-to-shooter”**

**After the air campaign, significant ground forces were still required to occupy and secure the area.**

## **Planning and Posturing**

**Just what is a major campaign?**

- **If Serbia took 78 days...**
- **Is everything except SWA and Korea to be a “No Plan” start?**

**What does that portend for planning, presence levels and required capabilities?**

- **CVBG / ARG presence in the EUCOM AOR?**
- **Army mobility and deployability?**
- **Joint war reserves and sustainability?**
- **The future of low density / high demand assets?**

# Short War Syndrome

**We called this one absolutely wrong...**

- ✦ **Affected much of what followed:**
  - **JTF activation, staff composition, facilities, command and control, logistics and execution**
  - **Lack of Coherent campaign planning**
  - **Lack of adequate component staffing**
  - **The race to find suitable targets**
- ✦ **OPLAN focused on brief, single-dimension combat**
  - **Deception, diversion & feint opportunities lost**
  - **We failed to plan for branches and sequels**

**What will we do next time?**

## JTF Activation in a Crisis

**JTF-NA was not formed around a pre-designated (and trained) theater staff**

- ✦ **Past paradigms have focused on training and planning for 3-star JTF Commanders only**
- ✦ **But major coalition operations of this magnitude require decisive and senior U.S. leadership (4-star)**
- ✦ **AFSOUTH / CNE was uniquely positioned to synchronize U.S. and alliance operations**

- **CINCUSNAVEUR staff formed the core cadre...effective, but not optimal**

## **Implications for theater postures for future?**

- **Training and broad investment required**
- **Manning/ infrastructure/ exercise regimes**

# **Forming a JTF Next Time**

## **Requirement for “JTF in a Box”**

- **Plan for fully-functional JTF and component staffs**
- **Identify...or build...facilities, connectivity, SOPs**
- **Develop an augmentee database and training program**
- **Use commercial systems, Joint Communications Support Element(JCSE), Deployable JTF Augmentation Cell (DJTFAC)**
- **Information Management Plan & C41 facility needed for staff, components... and alliance members!**

**CNE already working these for Europe**

# **The Political Environment**

**Affects every aspect of planning and execution**

- ✦ **Caused “incremental war” instead of decisive operations**
- ✦ **Excessive collateral damage concerns created sanctuaries... and opportunities... for the adversary – which were successfully exploited**
- ✦ **We did not anticipate the difficulties of NATO out-of-charter operations**
- ✦ **Ruling out a ground option corrupted JFLCC continuity, removed campaign planning, challenged C2, and resulted in a hasty last minute ground planning effort**

## **Ruling Out Ground Operations**

**Lack of the credible threat of ground invasion probably prolonged the air campaign**

- ✦ **Although never committed to action, TF HAWK was “their worst nightmare” for enemy forces in Kosovo**
  - **The focus of a particularly effective PSYOP effort**
- ✦ **Our only “sequential plan” was to do more of the same... with more assets**
- ✦ **Only the enemy could decide the war was over**

**Never say never... or deny yourself credible options**

# **The Ground Component**

**Lack of a Ground Component Commander was a mistake**

- **Even absent a combat ground offensive, the planning and staffing capabilities that an ARFOR would have provided were needed**
- **Shifted significant ground planning responsibilities to the JTF staff – only marginally prepared to handle myriad issues pertaining to Initial Entry Force for Kosovo and TF FALCON**

**You won't always know what you need until you need it**

# **Collateral Damage**

**The new “American Way of War”...**

- **Proud to be an American... only nation in the world with all the tools (analytic, modeling, platforms, weapons, training, intelligence)**

- **But our allies cannot match us...**
- **And adversaries will inflict as much CD as possible**
- **Very expensive... investment required to maintain and improve capabilities (in all areas)**
- **Creates public expectations... every incident is a perceived failure and will be exploited publicly**

**Or self-inflicted asymmetric warfare?**

## **A War of Weather**

**We may own the night... but poor weather creates sanctuaries and operational lulls**

- **Precision-guided is no longer “good enough”**
  - **We experienced greater than 50% cloud cover more than 70% of the time... and it wasn't the worst part of the year**
  - **Laser or EO-guided munitions cannot hit what the pilots cannot see**
  - **JDAM expenditure equaled the production rate**
- GPS-guidance is a requirement and the way ahead... invest accordingly... allies too**

# **Information Operations**

**At once a great success... and perhaps the greatest failure of the war**

- **First IO Cell activated at the JTF-level**
- **All the tools are in place...only a few were used**
- **Great people... with great access to leadership... but too junior and from the wrong communities to have the required impact on planning and execution**
- **Incredible potential... must become our asymmetric “point of main effort”... but not yet understood by war fighters... and classified beyond their access**

**Properly executed, IO could have halved the length of the campaign**

# **Public Info & Public Affairs**

**Not a shining moment for the U.S. or NATO**

- **The enemy was better at this than we were... and far more nimble**

- ✦ The enemy deliberately and criminally killed innocents by the thousand... but no one saw it
- ✦ We accidentally killed innocents sometimes by the dozens... and the world watched on the evening news
- ✦ We were continuously reacting, investigating and trying to answer “how could this happen?”
- ✦ Milosevic had informational “interior lines”

A much underutilized instrument of national and alliance power... ignore it at your peril

# Information Technology

Great technology...but needs controls...

- ✦ Information saturation is additive to “the fog of war”
- ✦ The demand for info will always exceed the capability to provide it... how much is enough?
- ✦ You can have too much staff coordination... and for issues that don’t require it
- ✦ Still need to “push” critical info vice “posting it” on the web page... no substitute for record traffic
- ✦ You can only manage from your DTC... you cannot lead from it

**Uncontrolled, it will control you and your staffs... and lengthen your decision-cycle times**

## **Re-Looking IADS Roll-Back**

**After 78 days of hard campaigning, we effected little degradation on a modern IADS system**

- ✦ **Redundant systems and well-trained operators with the discipline to wait for a better opportunity**
- ✦ **Affected tactical employment of airpower throughout the war (altitude restrictions)**
- ✦ **Required significant ISR and SEAD efforts throughout the campaign (stressed LD/HD assets)**

**Will we train for this environment... or continue to assume we can take IADS down early?**

## **Self-Inflicted Wounds in Asymmetric Warfare**

**The enemy benefited from:**

- ✦ **The NCA/ NAC target approval processes**

- **Our poor OPSEC posture (NATO and US)**
- **Our inability to wage full IO campaign**
- **Our self-suspension on cluster munitions**
- **Our standards for limiting Collateral Damage**
- **Our aversion to US casualties... and ground combat**
- **Our reactive vs. proactive Public Info/ Public Affairs**

**All of the above slowed the “Decide—Act” side of our own OODA loops... and reduced our control of the operational tempo**

**The next adversary will as well... and may take far better advantage of it**

## **A Glimpse at Urban Warfare**

**Not yet the “Three Block War” ...but not the Iraqi desert either**

- **Future campaigns will have more target areas like Belgrade than Basra... or Route Pack I**
- **Ups the political constraints by an order of magnitude**
- **Allows adversaries to utilize CNN to their best advantage... yields informational “interior lines”**

- Impacts across the spectrum of capabilities: ISR, targeting, munitions, IO, collateral damage, world opinion, coalitions, etc.

We were lucky... but luck is not a principle of war for the next Commander

## **Low Density/ High Demand**

Low density assets were absolutely in high demand

- Impacts of this campaign will be felt for years (platforms, systems, reliability, parts, personnel, retention, replacement costs)
- The trend is in the wrong direction... the demand will only get higher
- The density cannot remain low
- Regardless of service, an issue for joint funding at the highest priority
- We do not leave home without them

And without them... we cannot leave home

# Final Thoughts

**We succeeded. But what if...**

- ✦ **The enemy had attacked front line allies with ground forces... or theater ballistic missiles?**
- ✦ **The enemy had gotten even a few POWs... or KIAs?**
- ✦ **Invasion became the only option?**
- ✦ **The FRY submarine had sortied?**
- ✦ **We were still fighting in winter weather?**
- ✦ **We'd expended our precision munitions stocks?**
- ✦ **Public support had weakened or evaporated?**
- ✦ **France... or Italy (bed down)... had said "enough"?**
- ✦ **North Korea or Iraq had attacked?**

**We won't know until the next time**